

# 2 and a half

the sweetness and spice of a dad's little girls, and more



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## What I am is special

***A fun, humorous, informative (and maybe slightly self-indulgent) blog written by a proud dad about his wonderful little girls. And there's some other stuff too.***

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## Disney princesses as superheroes

Disney princesses as superheroes, posted at [Deviant Art](#). Audrey's favorite princess is Cinderella, although it's my lease favorite graphic here (assuming the girl in blue is Cinderella - I think it looks like Princess Diana but then, that's not Disney).

It's an interesting take.. But if you ask me,

- Ariel looks like she's ready to leave the water and spend a day at the beach
- Belle looks like Catherine Zeta-Jones but with a cape
- Aurora may be the next audition for the Jetsons
- Jasmine is cool and could be cast in the next Matrix movie
- I've already commented on #5
- Mulan looks like.. Mulan
- Snow White looks like Velma (from Scooby Doo) but taller with an even worse haircut
- Tinkerbell-turned-superhero has already been done - see Poison Ivy from Batman & Robin (1997)

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## 98 caramels

Well hi, me. Welcome back to your blog. Where have you been? Summering in Loveland, you say? I'd like to hear about it sometime. Someone else wrote about it already? I see... you had guests come visit in August. I'll check out the [link](#) :)

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## Impaled

Barry had a bad day last Thursday. He was running around outside and, being the clumsy chap that he is, knocked a bronze statue over. It fell on him and punctured his rear leg.

It wasn't a large statue, but large enough. Forty to fifty pounds is enough to do damage to all but the largest dogs. He was lucky, in fact. It could have punctured his torso or some other body part.

This all happened during my commute home from work. I received a phone call from my wife and she informed me about what happened. She even texted me pics, and I would post them here but they are not all that pleasant to look at. There's some protruding muscle and some blood, and if you're like me that doesn't sit well.

An hour after the incident, the only 24-hour vet in town informed us that Barry had been "impaled" and would need surgery overnight. "Impaled?" I thought. The antler of an innocent-looking bronze statue of a deer had impaled our dog? It sounded so severe. But he had, indeed, been pierced by a heavy, pointed object.

Poor Barry.

We picked him up in the morning, complete with a partially shaved right hind leg, stitches, and a cone on his head. Why the cone? Because it prevents him from chewing on the injury, tearing out the stitches and otherwise infecting the wound. He looks like Bosco from [One Crazy Summer](#). It's really called an e-collar, although it's got nothing to do with the Internet.

If you've ever had a dog who has had to wear an e-collar, you know he's about a foot wider than he normally is when it's on. That would be fine, except he has no idea he's wearing it, which means the dog is generally causing havoc simply by walking around. Tables and chairs get knocked over, walls get scratched, kids get taken down. That, plus the dog is handicapped. He cannot go up the stairs, for example, because the e-collar hangs too low and catches. He can't properly chew on a bone or a toy because he cannot hold it with his paws. And he often has to try several times to get through a doorway.

But, Barry can take solace in the fact that his cousin Sadie (my brother's red fox lab) currently wears an e-collar too. You'd think it's a back-to-school fad, but no. Sadie tore her ACL a few weeks back and has to wear one for the same reasons Barry does.

Everybody loves company, especially a dog. Here they are:

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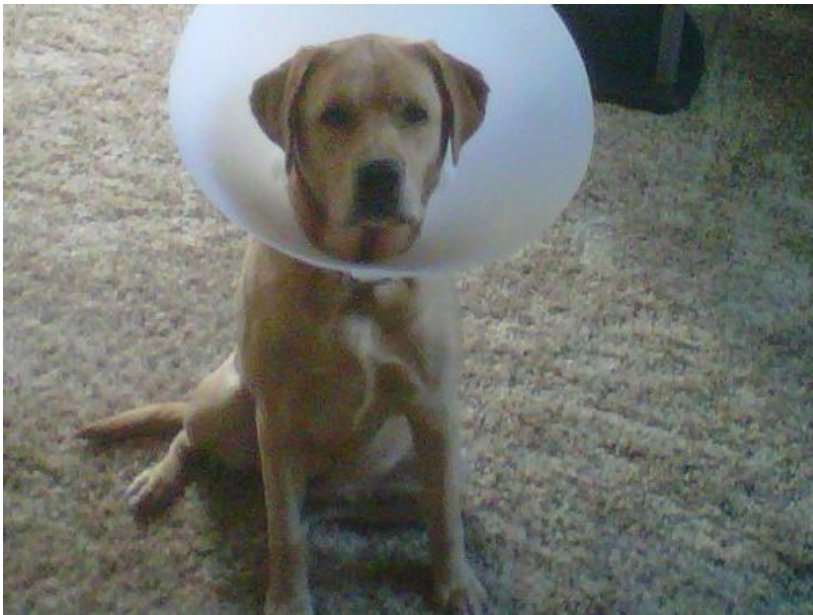
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**T H I N G S**



Have you had a dog who's had to wear an e-collar? What's been your experience?

John Duke on August 03, 2010 | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#) [Share This](#)

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## Swim lessons

I've sometimes wondered how certain people manage to make it through childhood without learning how to swim. I was talking to someone today, for example, about how Audrey is taking two weeks of swim lessons starting Monday. He mentioned that his mother never learned how to swim. "So you could literally plop her in a lake and she'd drown?" I asked.

Ok, I didn't ask that, but I would assume it would be true. On the one hand I would think an adult human might be able to figure swimming out, just like a dog does. Dogs don't get swim lessons. Our dog Barry literally walked off the edge of a dock the first time he encountered water. He didn't understand that the ground would no longer be there. (It was fairly humorous.) He sunk at first, but his head popped back up soon enough. He looked shocked, but figured out how to dog paddle pretty quickly. Figuring out the direction to the shore was another issue but you can't expect to learn everything in a matter of seconds, can you?

On the other hand, I would think an adult who didn't know how to swim might not figure it out in real time because they would panic and flail around. Fear would take over. But the question is - how do you even get there in the first place? Swimming skills are easy to learn, widely taught, inexpensive and frankly, are essential. How, as a parent, do you manage to avoid finding a way to teach your

"A baby will make love stronger, days shorter, nights longer, bankroll smaller, home happier, clothes shabbier, the past forgotten, and the future worth living for." ~Unknown

"Certain is it that there is no kind of affection so purely angelic as of a father to a daughter." ~Joseph Addison

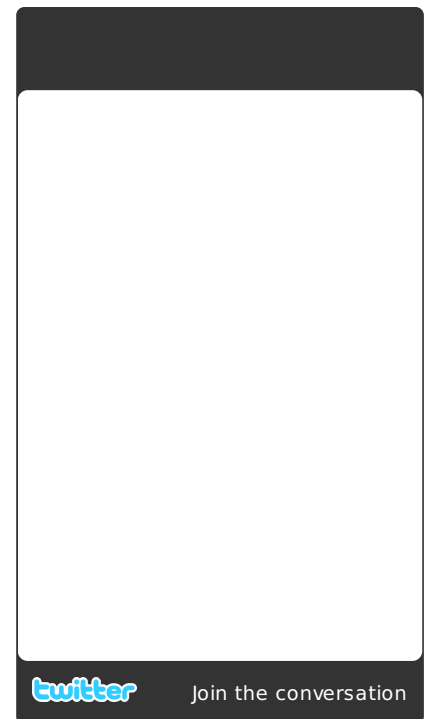
"There's something like a line of gold thread running through a man's words when he talks to his daughter, and gradually over the years it gets to be long enough for you to pick up in your hands and weave into a cloth that feels like love itself." ~John Gregory Brown, *Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery*, 1994

"Spread the diaper in the position of the diamond with you at bat. Then fold second base down to home and set the baby on the pitcher's mound. Put first base and third together, bring up home plate and pin the three together. Of course, in case of rain, you gotta call the game and start all over again." ~Jimmy Piersal, on how to diaper a baby, 1968

"There are three stages of a man's life: He believes in Santa Claus, he doesn't believe in Santa Claus, he is Santa Claus." ~Unknown

"A father carries pictures where his money used to be." ~Unknown

"Disobedience is the infant's first step toward autonomy." ~Lewis Mumford







children how to swim? How, as an adult, do you manage to avoid find a way to learn?

Admittedly I would like Audrey to have learned how to swim already because she's around water regularly. She had a breakthrough last week where she'll now enter deep water on her own and trust the floaties and/or life jacket to take over. It's a good step but she still couldn't swim on her own.

Once she learns it's a skill she'll use all her life and it will bring fun and pleasure and confidence to her. For my wife and I it will provide peace of mind (and make us proud to see our little girl swimming, too.) We may even get Grace going too - they start teaching around 1 and a half years old.

What do you think? Are swimming skills essential?

John Duke on July 23, 2010 | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)  [ShareThis](#)





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## Top 11 worst things about your girls growing up

I like top 10 lists. Or 11 in this case. They help me sort through and organize my thoughts around what matters and what doesn't. Here's my crack at what gnaws at me about my daughters growing up. (#11 is kind of a throwaway - it doesn't bother me much.)

11. Their poo begins to smell.
10. One step closer to dating (hence, the fake shotgun that will be next to my front door.)
9. One step closer to driving.
8. One step closer to dating (oops, did I say that one already?).
7. They learn how to talk back to you.
6. They're older which means you're older too.
5. They aren't cute little awkward babies anymore (they're still your babies though).
4. Other people and things can begin to have more influence than you do.
3. Loss of innocence.
2. You look back and worry you won't remember what they were like as little ones. (Although a baby blog can mitigate this.)
1. They'll leave home. (But they'll come back sometimes too.)

John Duke on July 13, 2010 | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)  [ShareThis](#)

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## Lightning storm

Somewhat off-topic but super cool to watch. Let's see... How does this vid apply to my blog?

10. There are three people other than me in our household - my wife, Audrey and Grace - which is the same number of lightning bolts hitting the buildings you see here.
9. 2.5 (the name of this blog) rounded upward equals 3 which, again, is the equal to the number of lightning bolts.
8. Audrey thinks she can run as fast as lightning.
7. If he could talk, Barry would say the same.
6. Audrey and Grace are both very bright - so are these bolts!
5. Audrey was born in a suburb of Chicago, whose cityscape is seen in this footage.
4. During one of our first nights living in Chicago, while we slept on the floor because our furniture had not arrived yet, there was a severe lightning storm just like this one. It felt like the lightning was in our living room, much like it must have felt for people on the viewing platform of the Sears Tower during this storm.
3. Chicago nightlife is electric (ok, that one is lame).
2. Lightning is a form of static electricity, which causes Grace's thin, wispy hair to stand on end when she plays with balloons.
1. Lightning results from the attraction of objects, like me and my wife, who, in the end, were the

reasons this blog began in the first place.

[Lightning strikes three of the tallest buildings in Chicago at the same time!](#) from [Craig Shimala](#) on [Vimeo](#).

John Duke on June 24, 2010 | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#) [ShareThis](#)



## 2 and a half debuts on Alltop

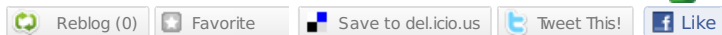
If you don't know [Alltop](#), you should. I'll just take an excerpt from their site because they, better than anyone of course, understand what they do:

*The purpose of Alltop is to help you answer the question, "What's happening?" in "all the topics" that interest you. You may wonder how Alltop is different from a search engine. A search engine is good to answer a question like, "How many people live in China?" However, it has a much harder time answering the question, "What's happening in China?" That's the kind of question that we answer.*

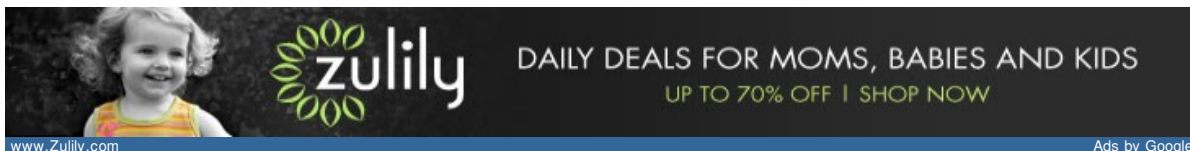
Alltop does this by aggregating stories from the best sites and blogs, by topic. Other ways to describe it? An online magazine rack. An information filter to help you find your nuggets of gold. There's an illustration [here](#).

How does [Zandahalf.com](#) fit into all that? Well, included in "all the topics" that interest you" are kids, parenting and the like. So if you click [here](#) you will find us, and others too. Just scroll the page.

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